

REMARKS

This submission is responsive to the Office Action of August 18, 2006, for which a response is due by November 18, 2006. According to the Office Action, claims 1-8 and 15-22 and 31 – 38 stand rejected for allegedly being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). In the case of claims 1 – 8, the rejection is based on the combination of U.S. Patent 5,693,876 (Ghitea, Jr. et al.) and U.S. Patent 6,289,332 (Menig). In the case of 15 – 22, 31 – 32 and 35 – 36, the rejection is based on the combination of Ghitea, Menig and U.S. Patent 5,551,803 (Hosaka et al.). Finally, in the case of claims 33 – 34 and 37 – 38, the rejection is based on the combination of Ghitea, Menig and European Patent Application 0091887 (Cerruti). Applicant is amending claims 15, 19, 36 and 38, while deleting claim 1 – 8, 16, 18, 20, 22, 31 – 35, and 37. Applicant is also adding new claims 39 – 40, which contain no new matter. Claims 15, 17, 19, 21, 36, and 38 – 40 remain pending. Reexamination and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In light of amendments made herein, Applicant submits that none of the cited references, taken alone or in combination, teach or suggest the arrangement of independent claims 15 and 19, as amended. Applicant further submits that the dependent claims are allowable by virtue of depending on allowable base claims.

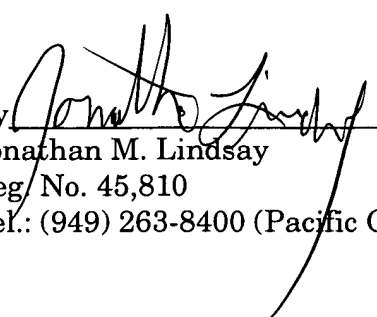
Applicants respectfully submit that the application is now in condition for allowance. If there are any questions regarding this submission or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response. Please charge any such fee or any deficiency in fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket 080437.49289US).

Respectfully submitted,

CROWELL & MORING LLP

Dated: November 13, 2006

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11/13/2006

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